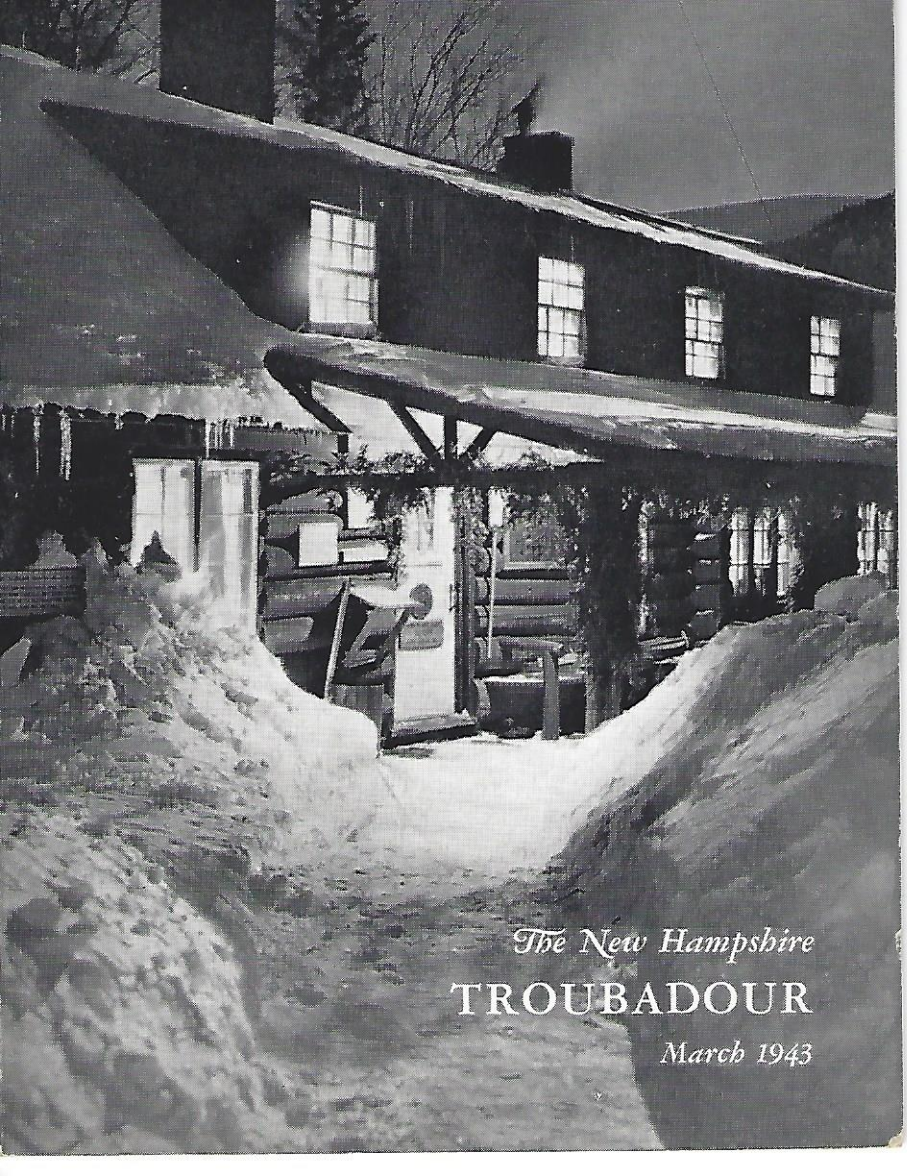


The New Hampshire

TROUBADOUR

March 1943

THE MOOSILAUKE STUDIO

IN EARLY SPRING

One reason why I love the winter woods, and find in a short vacation out-of-doors greater joy and more rejuvenation than in any other kind of holiday, is that in the forest there is always an abundance of natural beauty. Each tree in field or woods reveals the symmetry and poise of obedience to nature's unwritten laws. The beauty that nature distributes far and wide is a bountiful and generous beauty that visits high and low, the tall and short, the aged giant and the tender sapling. — From "Things the Snow Tells" by Wolcott Cutler in *Appalachia.*

The New Hampshire Troubadour

COMES TO YOU EVERY MONTH SINGING THE PRAISES OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, A STATE WHOSE BEAUTY AND OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD TEMPT YOU TO COME AND SHARE THOSE GOOD THINGS THAT MAKE LIFE HERE SO DELIGHTFUL. IT IS SENT TO YOU BY THE STATE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AT CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE. SUBSCRIPTION: 50 CENTS A YEAR

DONALD TUTTLE, EDITOR

VOLUME XII | March, 1943 | NUMBER 12

NEW HAMPSHIRE SPRING — 1943

by Jeanie Begg

SPRING IN THE NORTH COUNTRY is a headier tipple than in more moderate climates. While you are still fingering the spots on cheek-bones frostbitten by sub-zero winds, there comes a day early in March when the sun surprises you by its height in the sky. You walk on the crust of waist-deep snow over the still sleeping garden, longing for the feel of warm earth roughening fingers.

How sleeps the rose, Mrs. Lyons? Did she keep warm beneath her coverlet of pine boughs or will frozen branches force her to extraordinary effort to delight you with her pink perfection late in summer? How did the foxgloves winter? And the scillas — did mice, awaking hungry and too soon, lunch at beauty's expense?

Thwarted, you take an axe and bare-armed, floundering when the decaying snow-crust lets you down, go to the woods to thin the pine trees creeping in too crowded ranks over wounds left by the hurricane five long years ago. Before the war.

That night lashing rains wash your windows and the snow has

"*New Hampshire Cotton*" HAROLD ORNE

shrunk by morning. Spring's here, you think. But no! By dark the pump has frozen tight. Yet still you've faith in spring for each noon sees a climbing sun reach steadily strengthening fingers to churn deep mud in snow-cleared by-ways. Does Russian mud go deep enough to swallow the last wheel of raiding Nazi war-machines?

Daily earth's icy armor weakens until one day the sun pulls out some hillocks. The fields grow larger, sere. Spring's here, you say, hoping. Hoping. For in the morning a spitting snow is veiling brown grass left from another year.

"Sap snow," your neighbor cheers you. Sure enough, maple buds are swelling and buckets bloom around their trunks. From each fresh snow the grass emerges greener. Lilacs show pale life.

"I saw a robin," boasts a shivering friend.

"No," you tell him, wanting to believe.

The sun rides high; the wind is chill.

"It smells like snow," you grumble, hating winter furs and overshoes.

Then a week. Suddenly robins greet the sun. The air thrills with sweet murmurings of bluebirds. Song sparrows vocalize. Pert winter chickadees wax sentimental. The high sky is laced with wings and song.

When did they come? How will they stand the cold? How warm a shelter are those ancient pines?

Cold? It's warm — 70 in the sun. Only threadbare tatters of drifts are left. Puddles disappear. The earth feels firm beneath your feet. What if there's frost tonight, there's perfume in the air. There is, you're sure. You search the sunny hillside where first the snow sank in. Hepaticas! Pale blue and pink and white, as fragile as the partitions between seasons. Spring's here!

What if it snows again, you know arbutus soon will waste its fragrance beneath last year's leaves and bloodroot drifts spill out from under hedges their warmer whiteness. And when, from the black veins of the swamps, the quickening pulse of earth has squeezed the remaining icy drops, spring peepers shrill, your hope was not forlorn. The sun has won; another winter's in the past.

So shall spring someday come again to Norway and to Denmark, to Holland and to Russian battlefields where tread the iron heels of the invaders' boots.

"When tillage begins, other arts follow. The farmers therefore are the founders of human civilization." — *Daniel Webster.*

SAP TIME

by Ann Richards Briggs

DURING late March and early April the southern slopes of the north country show a mottled effect of occasional patches of bare ground against the snow.

In spite of the cold, buds are commencing to swell and rivers once more are gurgling beneath huge sheets of ice. When the sun runs high at midday followed by freezing nights, the true northerner knows that winter is on the wane, spring is in the air and sap time has come.

This season finds much astir around the old sap house, nestled in the center of the maple orchards, where men are busily preparing to make the most of a short season — sleds have been mended, taps are being inserted into the trunks of the sugar maples (many of the older trees accommodating three or four) and buckets hung ready to collect the "sweetest nectar of the gods."

Once the run has started it is an endless job as wood fires must be kept burning under the long metal evaporators into which from 35 to 50 gallons of sap are required to get one gallon of syrup. Men trudge back and forth, some wearing sap yokes and snowshoes while others are carrying it from hand sleds or those drawn by oxen, as they bask dreamily in the warm sunshine after laboriously plodding the rounds from tree to tree.

Occasionally, if alert enough, one sees a squirrel beating him to it, so to speak: that is, scampering up to a small branch where hanging onto the under side he bites the bark and catches the trickle of the sweet liquid.

To some this season of the year signifies only a time of impassable roads, of frozen ruts or mud that oozes to his boot tops, a damp chill relative only to late March and early April when it is too late for good skiing, too early for planting, but to many — those who

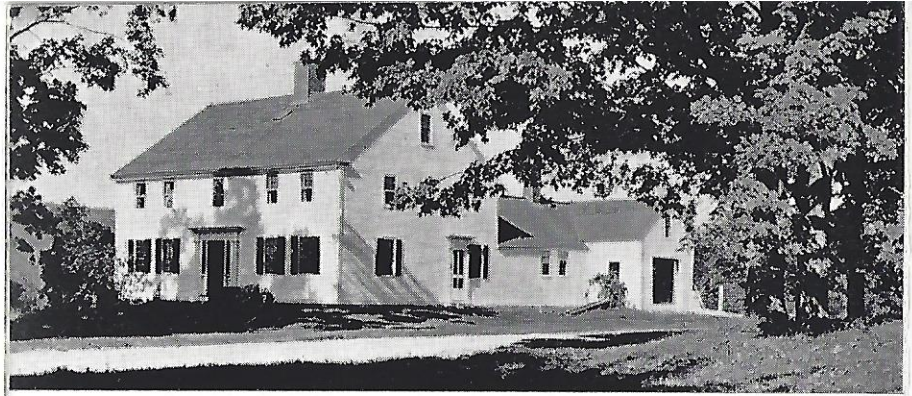
F. R. WENTWORTH

A modern sugar camp at East Hebron. Young steers are trained by hitching them ahead of a yoke of "handy" oxen

listen, will hear frost coming out of the ground, the "clicking" of the cross-bills busily working in the trees already budded, the "C-R-A-C-K"-"C-R-A-C-K" of the Northern Woodpecker getting ready to nest, and best of all the familiar sounds from the orchards and the odor of boiling sap from the old sap houses.

"The snow between the trees shows patches brown
Where rocks and boulders raise their shoulders from the ground,
And all the sloshy smells of spring abound
When Sapping time is here."

From "Sapping Time" by Robert J. Irish in "An Anthology of New Hampshire Poetry"



NEW HAMPSHIRE WEEKEND

by David H. Wood

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE of Daniel Webster fame stood on its toes to greet us as we came over the Vermont border for a weekend. The pressure of college studies was great, and the pressure of war news and incessant communiqués greater, and a weekend visit to the farm was indicated. The great hills came closer, and finally rimmed us in, and it was a sort of quiet cloak. We took our first deep breaths of good, clear air, and watched villages and outskirting houses rush by the car window.

Bob said finally, after we had passed down through a long rail-fenced lane, "Here is the house," but he need not have told me. It was a white farmhouse with green shutters, sprawling on a little rise by itself, the land dipping away and only tall trees approaching the house. It was a house which had grown old with the years, a house which stood venerably on this rise like a quiet aristocrat, still looking over the valley to the gently rolling hills beyond.

The old shed had become a garage, and when the car had been stored here, locked till our return, we unpacked the bicycles and keyed ourselves to the tempo of a restful weekend.

It cannot be cited even by men who know volumes about such things how much restorative power there is in such quietness as we found. It was truly wonderful to stand out in the inky black night after a strenuous round of square dancing and to see all the stars, the Seven Sisters bright just above the summer kitchen chimney. And it was as much of a treat to get into the lazy autumn quiet of a summer-warm day in the garden and to clean up the withering remains of the beans, and the ripening glow of the pumpkins. Never to be forgotten was the bright afternoon when we made the cider, picking the best of the windfalls and tree-left Northern Spies and Macs. We left the woodshed clean and neat-looking with its tiers of stacked logs, heavy strands of braided popcorn cobs and drying meshes of beans, and that was another afternoon of our time.

We found a simple pleasure in the house, which has been left as it was in the days even before Dan'l Webster's time. The warm brown of the kitchen wood-sheathing reflected the glow from the fire, and the tiny, swirled window panes distorted it. There is something about one of these old kitchens nostalgic for all of us, even if we know them only from reading and pictures. We can see the dark pot of beans taken from this big oven on Saturday, and the spicy mellowness of a long-baked Indian pudding.

The quiet and drowsy intimacy of an open fire in the big summer kitchen, which is lived in. Bob is amused at the way my chair takes periodic trips away from the fire, due to the pronounced slope of the floor. The old New Hampshire looking-glass clock ticks genially on the wall, and the night lies black beyond the small windows.

Finally, there is the last light to be put out, the steep, twisting stairs to climb, and a chill breeze in the low-panelled bedroom as we settle down for our last night.

The morning for our leaving is sharply cold, and the tang of

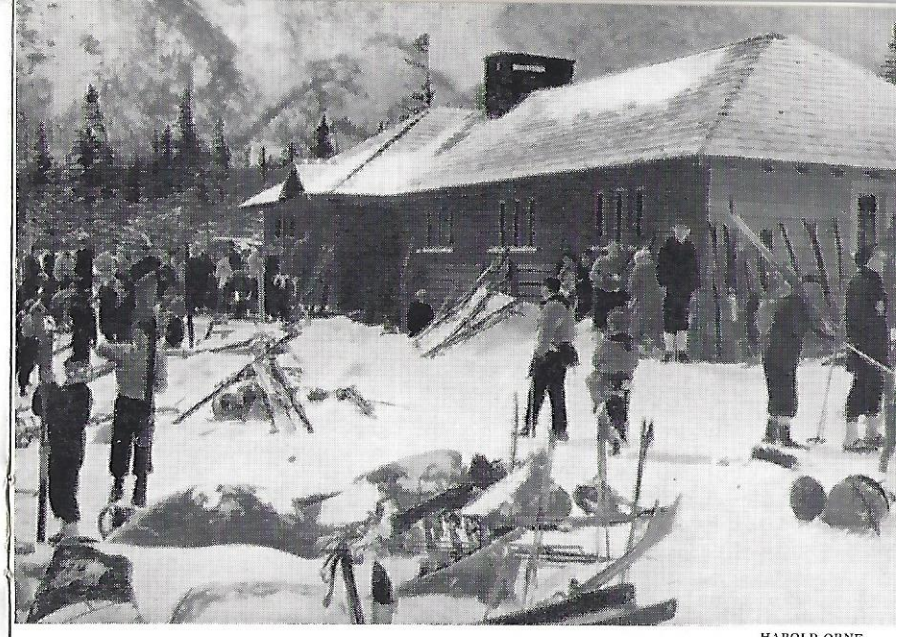
wood smoke is in the air. We feel refreshed and made new again as we close the door for the last time, look out over the stand of scrub trees to the frosty morning hill. The house still stands guardian-like on the the little ridge as we drive down the road, heading back to our cares again. We notice the morning sun, warmly touching the tree tops and making the white house fresh and rosy in the chill air. Then there is a bend in the road, the trees cut off our vision, and we are on our way.

UNITED STATES NAVY

Dear Editor:

You may ask what prompted me to write this letter to the TROUBADOUR so I'll tell you how it all started. We were having a perpetual cup of Navy coffee in our wardroom when a friend remarked that he felt a little contemptuous of a British officer's deep love for England and her countryside. The conversation drifted to skiing and mountains. Then it was my turn to point out his own love for a countryside — one which has given me a background I'll carry everywhere. So then we talked of places we knew.

Those of us who have always lived with the mountains at our door, hiked in them, slept high on their spruce and hemlock slopes and skied their winding trails, have accepted them and all who shared our love for them. Mountains, wherever they are, seem to breed the same mutual love and companionship. But now that they are not within sight the part they have played in our lives is in nostalgic evidence. The sweep of snow across Lafayette, the great sun filled bowl of Tuckerman's, a brook far up in the valley of Passaconaway, the flame that is fall and the glow of Chocorua's



HAROLD ORNE

U. S. Forest Service shelter at Tuckerman Ravine in the White Mountain National Forest. Spring skiing lasts until May and sometimes until June

sunsets — these are a universal love we all have and make up much of what some of us believe in and will fight for.

In the old strength — old but ever new — that comes from those hills, in the steady, proud, in-touch-with-earth lives of those who threw up the stone walls, in the rough, hard honesty of their labor and life is a lesson for all of us who believe we are fighting for an enforced strong peace which we will win. Regardless of what a man builds or where he builds, it's the countryside that prompts him to do so. The sudden realization of all it has done for him and what it has meant make every minute of it worth fighting for.

We'll see those hills again, know their sweep and deep beauty, we'll know the flash of a ski's wake on a powder trail, the sun tracking across Sunapee and the staunch sign that God put upon Cannon Mt. — the old Man of the Mountains. Yes, we'll see good pastures, shadows on a college campus and lights of villages down in the valleys. Wherever there is a mountain or a free bit of field there will be men who will fight for what they believe, and we who have known New Hampshire's mountains know what they or any such countryside can do. They breed a free race and they have given peace to many hearts, peace and strength, words that must be synonymous. They have done it for many of us, and they will do it again. I've spoken of places familiar and loved by those of us who have seen New Hampshire's rolling countryside — we are with others who love their own favorite mountains and fields — but the regard is the same and the determination the same — that our hills will know the same ways of living that they have so long inspired.

PHIL

NH

Among the Great of the Granite State

By J. DUANE SQUIRES
Colby Junior College

IV. SARAH JOSEPHA BUELL HALE

October 24, 1788–April 30, 1879

SARAH HALE was born in Newport, New Hampshire, in the year in which the American Constitution went into effect. Her long life during which she saw the infant nation develop into one of the great powers of the earth was replete with instances wherein she played an important part in the story of national destiny.

Left a widow with five children in 1822, Sarah Hale turned to writing as a source of livelihood. She published a volume of poems for children in 1830, the book containing what has long since become one of childhood's classics, "Mary Had a Little Lamb." In 1837 Louis A. Godey established his famous *Godey's Ladies Book* — the precursor of all women's magazines in the United States — and made Sarah Hale its editor. For exactly forty years Mrs. Hale wrote steadily and voluminously for *Godey's Ladies Book*, espousing during those four decades innumerable worthy causes and objectives.

She assisted in raising funds to complete the Bunker Hill Monument. She stimulated the movement to reconstruct and preserve Mount Vernon as a national shrine. She greatly helped her friend, Matthew Vassar, to organize and establish Vassar College. She was instrumental in persuading President Lincoln in 1863 to proclaim Thanksgiving as a national holiday. She was a pioneer in the fight for free public education for girls as well as boys, and for the right of women to teach in such schools. She early advocated social causes like day nurseries, public playgrounds, and the abolition of child labor. She sent out the first women medical missionaries. She believed in physical training for women and in women's property and legal rights on the same basis as men. She invented the term, "domestic science," to describe what she believed housekeeping and homemaking might be.

She was, in short, one of the truly remarkable women that the United States has known. Had New Hampshire produced no other sons and daughters of eminence, it could still hold up its head with its sister states. For Sarah Hale was a host in herself.

NH

"No man can tell whether he is rich or poor by turning to his ledger. It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich according to what he is, not according to what he has."

— *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Front Cover: The AMC Pinkham Notch Camp. Photo by Harold Orne.

Back Cover: Looking across Pinkham Notch from the Wildcat Trail to Mt. Washington. Winston Pote.

HILLSBOROUGH, Feb. 15 — "Any heating device in a church is an institution of the devil," said General Benjamin Pierce, father of President Franklin Pierce, when a committee was chosen to obtain a stove for the Meeting House back in 1811.

Dusty old records reveal, however, that the committee, after much heated discussion, decided by a vote of 7 to 3 to obtain a stove for the reason that many other meeting houses in New Hampshire were using stoves for heating, and Hillsborough must keep up with the times regardless of the devil himself.

Accordingly, so the records show, on a frigid morning in February, 1811, the congregation noticed with some apprehension and not a little curiosity that a huge black box stood in one corner of the building. Men unbuttoned their coats and wiped the perspiration from their brows, one woman fainted and was carried out. The minister, Rev. Jonathan Barnes, looked uncomfortable standing in his pulpit. At the close of the three-hour service, however, everybody was much chagrined when they learned that a fire had not as yet been started in the iron box.

The old Meeting House that was without heat for more than 30 years was mysteriously destroyed by fire early in the "Gay Nineties" period.

From the early town records of Durham:

1771 Mar. 25 Met at Meeting house — Voted "that Benjamin Smith, Esq. John Sullivan, Daniel Rogers, Esqrs., John Layn and Valentine Mathes be overseers of the poor if they will accept and to serve for nothing or without wages."

1778 Mar. 30 Voted that only two taverns in this Town are necessary. Voted that Capt. Shadrach Bell and Miss Sarah Adams are suitable persons to keep sd Taverns.

1782 Mar. 25 Regular — Meeting house — Voted that the person who takes the inventory shall have six bushels of corn.

A 50-page report: "Public Recreation in New Hampshire," has just been published by the State Planning and Development Commission.

It is the result of four years of study and research into the history of recreation in the state, the development of public recreational facilities on state-owned and federal areas, and the administration and financing of these facilities. It offers a long-range plan for the systematic development of New Hampshire public recreation areas, and it recommends administrative coördination under the State Forestry and Recreation Department, which would be enlarged and reorganized for the purpose.

A limited supply of the report is available at $1.00 a copy.

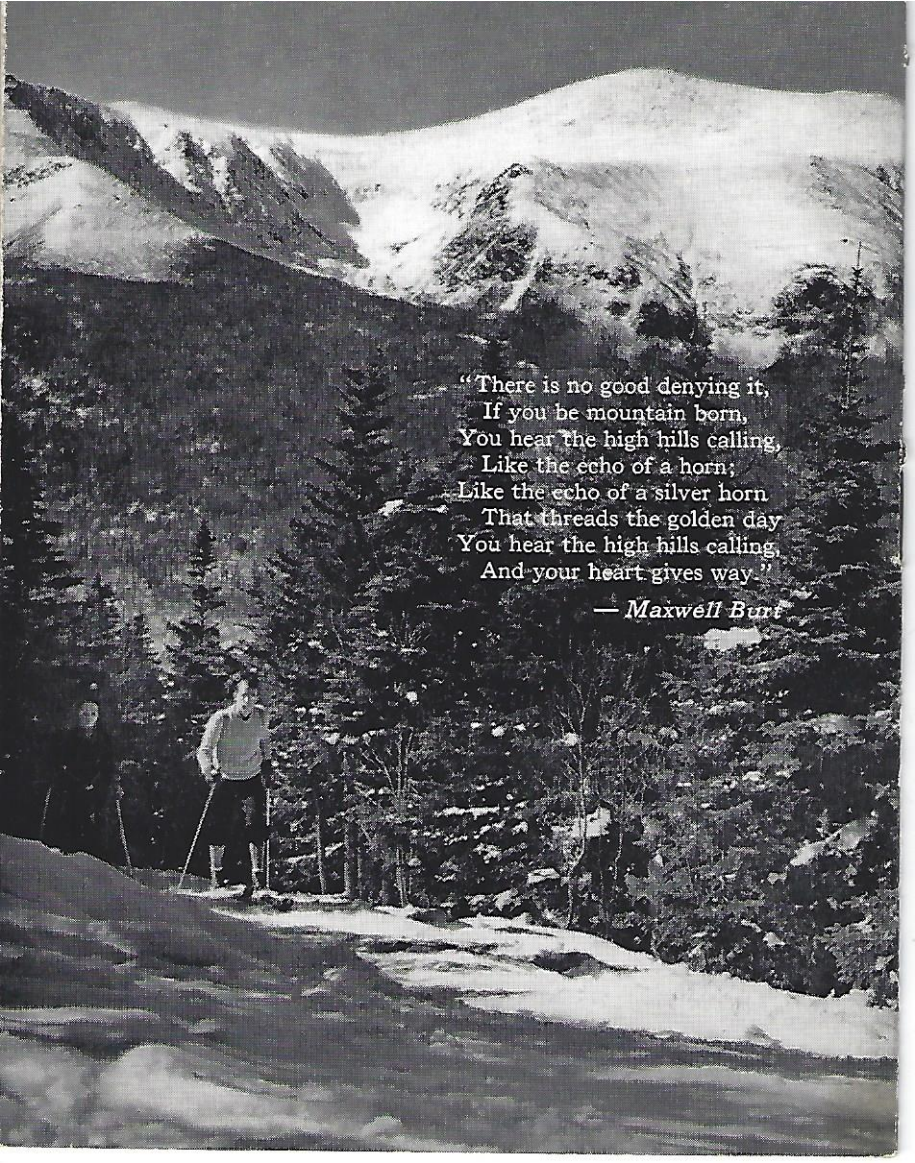
"IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE. . . ."

For half an hour a lawyer had been trying to worm out of an unwilling witness some opinion of his neighbor's reputation for veracity. Finally he lost patience, threatened contempt of court, and warned the witness that he had just one more chance to tell the court whether he regarded his neighbor as an honest man. After studying the walls and ceiling as if they might offer some clue, the witness spoke: "Wal, he's this sort of a feller. Raises lot of hogs. Lets 'em run in the field during the summer. When he wants 'em back in the barn he has to have the hired man call 'em, for the pigs don't place no confidence on what he says to 'em."

Cider was the common drink, farmers often putting as many as thirty barrels into the cellar to be used as vinegar and as a beverage in about the ratio of one to thirty. There were no pleasure wagons and none of the modern farm implements were in use. Ploughs had the mouldboard of wood covered with scraps of iron. Wooden shovels, shod with the same material, were in use; pitchforks of wrought iron were heavy and unwieldy; hoes were of the same construction; straight scythe snaths were in use at the commencement of the century. There was very little money in circulation during these early times and the strictest economy was practiced. Men, boys and girls went barefoot in summer, and on Sunday would carry their shoes as they went to church, putting them on when near their destination and removing them as they commenced their homeward journey.

— *From Ramsdell's History of Milford.*

RUMFORD PRESS
CONCORD, N. H.


"There is no good denying it,
If you be mountain born,
You hear the high hills calling,
Like the echo of a horn;
Like the echo of a silver horn
That threads the golden day
You hear the high hills calling,
And your heart gives way."
— Maxwell Burt